



UNCLASSIFIED

31a

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

15 June 1962

SENSITIVE

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SPECIAL GROUP (AUGMENTED)

From: Brig. Gen. Lansdale *Σd*

Subject: Cuban Subversion through Population Groups

Transmitted herewith is an excellent summary analysis by CIA of the travel and activities of Cuban organizations (student, labor, cultural) towards subversion in Latin America. It is noted that a special school in Havana, with mostly Soviet instructors and with a capacity of 1,000 students every 3 months, is teaching Latin Americans the techniques of agitation, sabotage, self-defense, and organizing demonstrations. Other schools and activities also are noted in the summary.

I am asking CIA to undertake the declassification of as much of this information as possible, for maximum publicity use to awaken world opinion to this conspiracy. The psychological impact of such publicity should be just as great as legal proof of Communists' sending in boat-loads of arms and ammunition to rebel groups in Latin American countries.

We needn't react only defensively. There are staunch democratic forces among the free Latin Americans. We still require dynamic actions in the Hemisphere which can be used against the Communist regime in Cuba.

Copies to:

1. General Taylor  
2. Mr. Johnson ←  
3. Mr. Gilpin  
4. Mr. McCone

5. Mr. Kennedy  
6. General Lemnitser  
7. Chief of Operations

Partially Declassified/Released on 1-5-88  
(F8P-75P) under provisions of E.O. 12356  
by N. Menan, National Security Council

UNCLASSIFIED

SENSITIVE

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION
DOES NOT APPLY

**UNCLASSIFIED**

**SUMMARY**

There has been an extensive exchange and movement of students between Cuba and other Latin-American countries. Hundreds of scholarships have been issued by the Cuban government to students throughout Latin America. Invitations have been extended to Cuban celebrations and to meetings of international left-wing student organizations held in Havana. Also, Cuban students have been sent abroad to other Latin-American countries to agitate, to lend support to revolutionary student groups, and to engage in local subversive activities.

Labor unions in Cuba, formerly some 1,500 in number, have been welded into one national union serving the government. The CTC has aggressively entered the international labor movement in Latin America supporting the Communist cause. It has taken the initiative in Latin America in establishing a rival Communist dominated international union of plantation workers.

Cuba, through its Institute for Friendship with Peoples, has become very active in inviting cultural leaders to visit Cuba. Cuban Friendship Societies are proliferating in Latin America as elsewhere, and increasing interest and attention is being devoted

**UNCLASSIFIED**

**UNCLASSIFIED**

-2-

to international front organizations involving artists, journalists, women, educators, and "peace" lovers throughout Latin America.

2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

**UNCLASSIFIED**

-3-

**DISCUSSION**

**Student Activities:**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

reported that hundreds of Latin-Americans were being brought to Cuba for training and indoctrination. A special school was opened in mid-1961 in Havana to train young Latin-Americans in methods to achieve Communist objectives in Latin America. Some 1,000 students can be trained in each three-month course. Such a school could graduate 4,000 students per calendar year. The course includes one month of Communist theory, plus two months of practical training in agitation, sabotage, self-defense, and the organization of public demonstrations. Most of the instructors are Spanish-speaking Soviet nationals.

Special six-month courses were reported to have been given in Cuba in 1961-62 to Latin-American women, trade unionists and professional people, with special tasks assigned to graduates after their return to their own country. Some foreign students resident at Cuban universities, as well as Latin-American youth and students visiting Cuba, have been given special paramilitary training.

**UNCLASSIFIED**

**UNCLASSIFIED**

-4-

Cuban students have been involved in subversive activities among Latin-American student organizations, and Cuban Embassies have frequently supported leftist and other revolutionary student groups in Latin-American countries. For example, five Cuban students arrived in Mexico City from Brazil on 27 October 1961. When their baggage was examined at the airport, a large quantity of propaganda material was discovered and confiscated by Mexican officials. Last August, Buenos Aires police raided a Communist school and broke into a class being conducted by Alejandro RAMOS Diaz, a Cuban student. Large quantities of Communist propaganda were seized, including instructions for the recruitment of volunteers for the Cuban forces.

On 19 October 1961, the Superior Council of the Universities of Cuba announced that 1,000 scholarships were to be made available to Latin-American university students, confirming Castro's earlier promise to the International Students Union. It was also announced that applications for the scholarships had to be filed with Cuban diplomatic missions or sent directly to Havana. The scholarship program involves study at three Cuban universities: Las Villas, Santiago de Cuba, and Havana. The Latin-American students undoubtedly will receive political indoctrination along lines already given routinely

**UNCLASSIFIED**

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

to Cuban students. Since political indoctrination is an integral part of a university's curriculum in Cuba today, it follows that foreign students in attendance are exposed to the same instruction. Further, it has already been established that foreign students who attended Cuban universities during the academic year 1960-1961 received Marxist ideological training in their courses.

The International Student Union Congress (Communist) was held in Havana from 23 May through 8 June 1961, with world wide representation including Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and a delegate-at-large representing the West Indies.

Activities ranged from organization of seminars on imperialist and clerical penetration in Latin American education and culture to resolutions to give moral and "material" help to Panamanian students, suffering under U. S. imperialist occupation, to re-establish their territorial integrity.

One of the principal speeches of the meeting was given by Jose Venegas, who traced in detail the history of the penetration and domination of Latin America by the United States, pointing out that U. S. imperialist policy towards Latin America was laid out as far back as 1787.

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

-6-

The entire meeting, including its unanimous resolutions involving Communist Party activities on a world-wide basis, followed the Soviet pattern of agitation among students generally.

Some Latin-Americans have actually received training in sabotage and guerrilla warfare in Cuba. Although members of these groups have not necessarily been students, many of those trained were young enough to move freely in student circles. For example, three Salvadoreans who went to Havana for the 26th of July celebration in 1961 remained in Cuba for eight months of training which included espionage and sabotage. Another example is that of three members of the Communist Youth of Ecuador who travelled on a chartered Cuban flight with the Ecuadorean delegation to the anniversary celebrations on 1 January 1962 but who remained in Cuba to attend a six-month course in political affairs sponsored by the Cuban Government. Still another case is that of an Ecuadorean, working independently of the Cuban Embassy, who was responsible for selecting Ecuadoreans for training in guerrilla warfare and general revolutionary action. Upon selection, their names were submitted directly to a Cuban organization and the necessary money for travel expenses to Cuba was provided to the candidates.

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

- 7 -

Labor Organizations

By early 1961, after the Castro regime had consolidated its control over organized labor, a significant change in labor re-organization became evident. Overlapping organizations were established to encompass virtually all workers. Local unions were "voluntarily" abolished in favor of one "national" union, with authority centered at headquarters in Havana.

The Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC) which before 1959 had been active in the international field and affiliated with non-Communist organizations withdrew from these organizations after 1959 and turned its attention to building up rival Communist-dominated international labor bodies.

Early evidence of this trend was the sending of a Cuban delegation to the Metallurgical Workers Conference in Brazil in August 1960. This conference was sponsored by the Communist-dominated W. F. T. U.

Further evidence of movement toward communism was the establishment of a new organization of plantation workers and the calling of a conference in Havana in March 1961. This was attended by representatives from Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Haiti and Mexico. Prominent also at the meeting were

~~SECRET~~

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

- 8 -

delegates from Communist China and the leaders of the International

W. F. T. U.

Resolutions stressing the political and economic exploitation of workers by U. S. monopolists and the like were a dominant theme of the meeting. Travel expenses of all foreign delegates were defrayed by the Cuban union (CTC) and delegations were treated as guests of the Cuban Government during their stay.

Later in November 1961, the CTC invited foreign labor leaders to attend its congress in Havana. Labor leaders from Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, British Guiana, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Panama, Brazil, Nicaragua, Argentina, Colombia and Venezuela were present.

The international W. F. T. U. underwrote travel costs for some of the delegates and the Mexican labor leader Vincente LOMBARDO Toledano took part in these arrangements. (He is a vice-president of W. F. T. U.) Following the meeting in Havana, a special flight took selected delegates on to the W. F. T. U. congress in Moscow.

Again in December 1961, Cuba took part in an international meeting in Montevideo sponsored by construction workers. Basically the meeting was developed into a strong anti-imperialist demonstration.

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

~~SECRET//CLASSIFIED~~

- 9 -

Other Organizations

It is now common practice to invite cultural leaders to Cuba to participate in national celebrations such as May Day activities, anniversary of the 26th of July and the like. The executive organization responsible for planning and executing these visits is the Cuban Institute for Friendship with Peoples (ICAP). ICAP's function is to insure that such visitors are impressed with the social order in Cuba and the political progress of the people. Costs of travel and expenses incurred by invited guests are defrayed by ICAP in many cases. In this way ICAP resembles the parallel Soviet organization which acts in a liaison capacity between the Soviet Government and foreign guests.

In April 1961 sixteen Cuban women travelled to Mexico to attend the Meeting of Women of Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, at which plans for a July 1962 hemispheric congress of women were discussed. About the same time, a similar meeting was held in Rio de Janeiro, attended by delegates from Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. Celia de la Serna de GUEVARA, mother of Ernesto "Che" GUEVARA, was among the representatives of Argentina attending the meeting and was considered to have been a "Cuban" delegate.

~~SECRET//CLASSIFIED~~

~~SECRET~~ ~~CLASSIFIED~~

-10-

On 4 January 1962 a special preparatory meeting for the July women's congress was held in Havana and was attended by delegations from the women's organizations of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Uruguay, Panama, and Dominican Republic. The meeting was held to amplify and elaborate on the agenda and themes of the July congress and to designate preparatory committees. Women from Chile, Mexico, and Uruguay participated in the Fifth National Plenary of the Federacion de Mujeres Cubanas (FMC) in Havana on 30 and 31 January 1962.

The FMC is the organization charged with agitating within the churches to spread dissension and is closely associated with the Association of Rebel Youth (AJR) whose members agitate outside the churches.

A meeting was called of the executive committee of the International Organization of Journalists, a Communist front, in Havana in mid-January 1962. It was attended by representatives from thirty-five countries, including delegates from Mexico, Bolivia, Peru, Argentina, Brasil, Chile, British Guiana, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

~~SECRET~~ ~~CLASSIFIED~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
~~SECRET~~

- 11 -

There is evidence of similar aggressive activities on the part of Cuban organizations in the development of international friendship societies (Communist) with other Latin-American countries, in the formation of international artistic and cultural groups and the formation of "peace" committees. All of these bear the historical markings of Communist-inspired and executed front organization.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
~~SECRET~~